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GUNRUNNER
SEATTLE

The 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals has ruled alleged gunrunner Eugene Clegg should be allowed to see classified government documents.

The former Seattle-area school teacher says the documents will show he was acting as a U.S. agent when he allegedly tried to smuggle weapons through Pakistan for anti-Soviet rebels in Afghanistan.

The appeals court upheld Tuesday an earlier order by U.S. District Judge Barbara Rothstein, who said Clegg should have access to the documents from the Defense and State departments and the CIA.

Government attorneys would not comment on the ruling, but defense attorney Tom Hillier said prosecutors may decide to appeal or drop the charges against the 36-year-old defendant.

Hillier said he did not know the contents of the documents.

'Something is there and four judges have now found it is conceivably relative to the defense of Mr. Clegg,' he said.

Clegg was convicted in Pakistan of gun-running and was sentenced to 10 years of hard labor.

But he was then turned over to United States authorities, and he faces federal charges of shipping guns from the Seattle-Tacoma Airport to Pakistan four times between August 1981 and August 1982.

Clegg was arrested in Islamabad, Pakistan, in September 1982 after customs agents seized a shipment containing 66 automatic rifles, 35 automatic pistols and 2,500 rounds of ammunition.

U.S. authorities allege Clegg had weapons mailed to him in Pakistan, where he was working under a teaching contract at the International School of Islamabad.

Clegg is accused of intending to live on profits from gun smuggling.